working circles, in all the divisions except the Southern, was worked for the extraction of standing timbers of the principal and auxiliary species. The working plan report of the Shendurni valley forests was sanctioned. The remaining portions of the Kulathupuzha and Yerur working circles were completely explored and valued. The whole of the Ariankavu working circle was also valued. On the whole, about 127 square miles of forests were explored and valued during the year under review, against 73 square miles in 1082. One of the Deputy Conservators was on special duty for making a valuation survey of the teak plantations in the State. He completed the survey and submitted a working plan report, which was sanctioned. His Highness' Government are anxious that this important work should be pushed through to completion. The Acting Conservator has been asked to devote his special attention to the matter and to submit similar working plans for the other reserves as early as possible.

28. Communications and buildings.—A sum of Rs. 13,860 was spent during the year—Rs. 6,130 on roads and bridges, Rs. 7,194 on buildings and Rs. 536 on other works. The work done in all the divisions is reported to have been satisfactory.

29. Forest offences.—745 cases of offences against the forest laws were received during the year, and including the 234 cases pending at the beginning of the year, there were for disposal 979 cases. Of these, 226 cases were thrown out as false by the department and 564 cases were prosecuted, leaving a balance of 189 cases pending at the end of the year. Inclusive of the 138 cases of last year, 702 cases were prosecuted, of which 142 were convicted, 72 acquitted, 331 compounded and 37 withdrawn, leaving a balance of 120 cases at the end of the year. The progress made in the disposal of cases was satisfactory. The percentages of convictions and acquittals to the total number of cases disposed of by the Magistrates were 66 and 34 respectively. The amount of compensation realised in cases compounded was Rs. 2,041. The largest number of offences committed was under "damage to royal and reserved trees", the number being 224, against 88 in the year previous. Cases of illicit collection, possession or removal of timber and of forest produce, and of unauthorised clearing within reserves, numbered 220 and 9 respectively, against 192 and 47 in 1082.

30. Forest fires.—Out of the total area of forest reserves, only the teak and other plantations, aggregating 2,827 acres, were under regular fire-protection for four months. The whole of this protected area except half an acre was immune from fire during the year. His Highness' Government realise the necessity for gradually bringing other areas under a regular system of fire-protection by cutting and tracing fire lines and employing a larger patrolling staff. The Acting Conservator has been asked to keep this important matter in view and to work out a scheme so as to extend efficient protection to the more valuable of the forests, within the course of a few years. The total cost incurred on fire protection amounted to Rs. 2,925. An area of 37 square miles was burnt during the year, against 6 square miles in 1082.

31. Forest produce.—The total quantity of timber removed from the forests was 9,30,175 cubic feet or 9,200 cubic feet more than in 1082. Of this, 8,13,664 cubic feet were removed by Sirkar agency, 1,12,827 cubic feet by private

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individuals, 3,354 cubic feet by right holders and 330 cubic feet on account of free grants. The stock of timber in the depots on the last day of the year was 1,74,443 cubic feet, as against 2,12,453 cubic feet on the corresponding day of 1082.

32. Receipts and expenditure.—The gross revenue amounted to Rs. 7,04,431, against Rs. 6,43,994 in 1082, the increase being Rs. 60,437. The expenditure also rose, from Rs. 4,92,382 to Rs. 5,39,093. The net revenue was Rs. 1,65,338, against Rs. 1,51, 612 in the preceding year. The proportion of the expenditure to the gross revenue was the same as in 1082, *viz.*, 76 per cent. His Highness' Government note the small increase in the net revenue, but they attach no importance to it. They have repeated, for the information and guidance of the Acting Conservator, what they had already stated to Mr. Bourdillon in January last, that *what was wanted in the Forest department, more than anything else, was to work scientifically and carefully conserve existing reserved forests.* In view to the apprehension of overcutting expressed by the Acting Conservator and already referred to, the most urgent needs of the Forest department are carefully prepared working plans. No consideration of showing an early increase in the net revenue would be allowed to interfere with the wise policy, already adopted by the Acting Conservator, of reducing the fellings—and even stopping them altogether in some cases—till steps have been taken to explore the working circles and to obtain a careful estimate of their capability in respect of the more valuable species of timber.

33. Miscellaneous.—The Forest Code, which was passed in 1082, came into force from the beginning of the year under review.

The system of patrolling the roads by forest guards, in lieu of maintaining watch stations, which was tried as an experimental measure in 1082, was abolished during the year, as it was found not to work successfully. The watch stations which had been closed had to be revived.

Rules were passed during the year for throwing open the reserved forests and plantations of the State, at the discretion of the Conservator, to the grazing of cattle on payment of prescribed fees.

The fee of 4 annas per ton, tentatively imposed on fuel removed from unreserved lands, was permanently raised to one rupee per ton from the beginning of the year, head-loads being however free.

A fee of 12 annas per cartload, or Re. 1–8 as. per ton, was imposed from the beginning of the year on charcoal burnt in or removed from the unreserved lands.

A light fee was also sanctioned to be levied on vakkanar (*sterculia villosa*) and bamboo shoots (*mulanchilli*) removed from the forests.

Two State stipendiary students were sent to undergo training in the Forest College at Dehra Dun.

Two Deputy Rangers of the department were also deputed to the Coimbatore Forest School for training.

Two State students who were undergoing training at Dehra Dun passed out and were appointed as Rangers during the year. His Highness' Government are insisting as far as possible on the entertainment of only passed men in the superior grades of the department, and stipendiary students are being sent out for training

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